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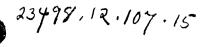
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ARTIST'S WIFE:

A Brama,

in two acts.

BY

EDWARD RANGER.

LONG SUTTON;

JOHN SWAIN, PRINTER, HIGH-STREET.

1850.





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HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY FROM F THE BEQUEST OF EVERT MANSEN WENDELL

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Ciermont
Duke of Barnstour.
Barren.
Regers.
Francis.

Lady Julia. Isabelia. Mrs. Preper.

NOTE.

I "pondered well" before christening this Drama, there being one in French of the same name, from which the story is taken. I merely mention this, that I may escape the unenviable title of Translator, and the ignominious epithet of Plagiarist. By comparing the two Pieces, it will at once be seen, that I have only painted the same subject, as a dozen painters might paint the same landscape, and make a dozen very different pictures, and all be equally original. My chief reason for adopting the title, is, that the Drama has been uncommonly successful under the title of "The Artist's Wife," a piece which was written for me by Mr. a'Becket, and brought out at the Haymarket Theatre in 1838. In Mr. a'Becket's version, however, I found that somewhat more action and variety, and a little et ceters, were wanting, which I think I have supplied. As I played the principal character at the Haymarket, Mr. a'Becket allowed me to introduce some sentences of my own, which have been printed from the Prompt Book; and as those sentences were of importance to me then, they are of the same importance to me now: I have, therefore, transferred them to the present Piece, conceiving I am justly entitled to what is my own.

EDWARD RANGER. .

• . .

ARTIST'S WIFE.

ACT I.—SCENE I.—An Anti-room at Clermont's.

(Enter Francis L. H.)

This world is full of trouble! There can be no doubt of that. Nothing but bother and perplexation! If a man happens to get a little pleasure, it costes more than its worth! Woman, what was born to be man's comfort, more oftener is his torment, and everythink as what was intended to be a blessing, inspires to make him miserable! All the Poets, from Shakspeare down to Napoleon Bonypart, proves this truth, and exterminate it beyond the most convincing doubt. What do Amlet say? Don't he say, he wishes his flesh would melt, bones and all-because all woman wasn't nothing but frailty. And Amlet was a Prince, and if a Prince could speak so bad about his mother, what must I do, whose case is very much like Amlet's: for Amlet loved Hophelia, and I love Hisabella! And what is worse, the cruel creature knows it, and trifles with my fond antipathy! Woman man's comfort! Humbug! Woman's a thorn what gnaws his witals.

(Isabella without, Sings Italian grotesquely.)
There now! Only hear that now! Things is come to a pretty pass, when Ladies'-maids transpire to the igh honor

to sing Hightalian. Pity it is, that servants didn't know their places properer. Ah, Hisabella, youv'e got a good Art I am sure, but your pride will ruin you; you'r above your business—but poor sagacious fool, your hignorance is to blame; your sad perfection, is your ead and not your art.

(Enter Isabella R., singing Italian.)

Isab. Do you admire Norma, Francis?

Fran. (Who was reading, turns to her and says) Alas! Poor Ghost!

Isab. Ghost! Come don't call names, or I shall leave the room.

Fran. Woman, thy name is frailty.

Isab. Very well, if you are so ungrateful for my attention to you, I shall just treat you as you deserve. I came to have a little chat with you, and keep you company awhile, and all the thanks I get, is to be called names—ain't you ashamed of yourself?

Fran. I didn't call you names.

Isab. You did.

Fran. I didn't.

Isab. You did: you said my name was frailty. Isn't that calling names?

Fran. Ah, Hisabella; your Art is good, but you're too

proud.

Isab. Pooh! Pooh! Frank! Now don't you be a ninny. How am I proud?

Fran. Why you transpire to things beyond you.

Isab. Transpire!

Fran. Yes.

Isab. Aspire, you mean. And so do you.

Fran. What I trans-

Isab. Aspire.

Fran. Aspire to things beyond me—that's incorrect. I know my place and my position, and am contented to remain in my proper speare (sphere).

Isab. Why how can that be, when you know you've asked me a thousand times to be your wife—that's ambition

for you.

Fran. Hambition!

Isab. Yes: I your wife! I! that lords might sigh for! Marry a—

Fran. What?

Isab. Ave, a what!

 ${}^ullet Fran. \;\; exttt{What am I then ?} \;\;$

Isab. Why only an inferior.

Fran. Well, I know that; but I am your inferior equal. Isab. But equal marriages are never bappy. If ever I bless any man, it must be one far, far above me; or were I now like Lady Julia, I would do as Lady Julia has done: I'd condescend, when I could find a lover that adored me, as she is worshipped by her husband—to sink from my high dignity and become an artist's wife.

Fran. Oh! Hisabella! What a hedication you have got! There isn't not no use at all for me to try and talk with you; for you was hedicated for a governess you know:—and if I am more efficient in my larning than you

ате--

Isab. De-

Fran. Eh?

Isab. De-de.

Fran. De-what?

Isab. Deficient in your learning—you said ef-

Fran. Well, whether I said D or E or F, no matter: what I lack in larning, I'll make up in love. Oh! lauk! I'm very sure that master don't love Lady Julia more than I love you.

Ieab. Oh, yes, he does though. See how hard he works to give her every thing her heart can wish for—always painting, painting, painting, from one year's end to the other. I wonder so much labour and confinement do not

kill him.

Fran. Ah, that's the worst of it. Don't you see now, Hisabella, if master had but married a nice young woman in his own speare, he would't have to work so hard as he does now, to keep up Lady Julia's rank; and I know, with all his work, he's mighty short of money.

Isab. You know! How do you know anything about the

matter?

Fran. Why, I has eyes and sees. Besides, I havn't had no wages for this eight months; and Master used to be so

punctual:—not that I cares about my wages, for if it isn't perfectly subservient for him to identify me for my services—

Isab. Indemnify!—means to pay.

Fran. Yes, that's what I meant. To pay me. The effect merely this: Master as always acted like a gentleman to me, and I'll act like a gentleman to him.

Isab. Well said, Master Frank; one good turn deserves

another.

Fran. I am sorry he's so poor, though. I don't think paintin's profitable. If I was him, I'd give it up, and go to the country, and enjoy myself. With Lady Julia's nadsome income, they could live as cosey now as could be.

Isab. Handsome income! What do you call a hand-

some income?

Fran. Why I should say two thousand pounds a-year is

moderately comfortable little sum.

Isab. Two thousand pounds a-year! Why Lady Julia

Fran. Law! Well, you know best. Then how much

has she got?

Isab. Barely four hundred! And what is that to live on

in London?

Fran. It won't pay house-rent: that is, and taxes.

why, every body said she was a hairess.

Isab. And so she was: but then her father, the good Lord Barkhurst, was very wild; and spent his money without thinking: and when he died, he owed a great deal more than his estate would pay. So what did Lady Julia do?

Fran. What?

Isab. What every truly proud and noble gentlewoman would. Rather than have her father's name dishonored, she sacrificed her fortune, and paid every penny of her fa-

ther's debts.

Fran. Well, that was noble! Heaven bless her for it! But then, I don't think Lady Julia's proud; or else she wouldn't have married Master—plain Mr. Clermont—for with her high birth, and her great beauty, and her sweet voice,—lauk! how she can sing, can't she? Her generous heart, and all her accomplishments, ('tis true she had no money,) but for all that, she might have picked and alloosed.

Isab. Aye, that she might. She might this day have been a duchess, and a rich one too. But then she loved an humble artist.

Fran. And doesn't that exactly prove just what I say. Unequal marriages is not the thing. Now, if she had married in her own speare, there wouldn't have been no struggling to keep up appearances. No, sweetest Hisabella, if you want to be happy, keep to your proper speare. I am the proper man for you. Sweets to the sweets. Just look at the.

Isab. But I can pick and choose. Just look at me. You are beneath me, sir!

Fran. Then imitate your noble Missus. You mimic her in every thing a'most. You sing Eyetalian—or you try to—'cause she sings it. Then mimic her by marrying beneath you.

Isab. And struggle to keep up appearances: no, no, Master Frank, you'r rather a good-looking youth, but you want experience and must improve your education; and when you have got a fortune, you may think of me.

(Exit R.)

Fran. A fortin! Ah! Hisabella, if them's your sentiments, I tremble for you. A woman what loves money never's good for nothing; for they'll stick at nothing so they get it. Improve my hedication! Havn't I for her sake been reading books till midnight, for this six months? I know Amlet almost through: "To be or not to be; ave, that's the rub!" Yes, what is to be, will be. bella is to be mine—I'd do anything to attain her. I'd even go upon the stage, if it is fortin she wants. I have every perquisite: a fine figure, a pleasing, fine, expressive, manly countenance; a noble figur and a woice for tragedy particular; -in a few months I could make a fortin, I am convinced. But then, there's the degradation. I shouldn't like to lower myself so much. No, hang it, I couldn't do it. When a man has a good persition in society, he ought to be careful—very careful—not to lose it.

SCENE II.—Clermont's Painting Room.

(Clermont and Lady Julia discovered. Clermont Painting, and Lady Julia appearing to be Studying a Piece of Music; with a Guitar, &c.

Cler. Diable m'emporte! Ugh!

Lady J. What's the matter?

Cler. Pah! I have been working here at this devil picture for two months, to get one little expression, and I

cannot get it.

Lady J. Then why don't you put it by for a little while? If you work at it too intensely, it's of no use whatever. If I were you I'd put it by for a week or so, and then per-

haps it would come all at once.

Cler. No, I'll see him hanged before I put him by. will work at him till I conquer him. (Yawns and stretches.) ${f Y}$ ou old villain picture, if you think to tire me out, you are mistake. I will work at him if it is twenty year but I will get what I want.

Lady J. Ah, you will never take my advice.

Cler. Your advice!

Lady J. Yes, my advice.

Cler. Oh, yes, of course! Your advice must be so valuable, you know. You have had so much experienceyou are such a nice old woman.

Lady J. No matter for that: you know you always do

right when you take my advice.

Cler. Yes, when I take it I know I do.

Lady J. And if you took it oftener, it would be all the better for you.

Cler. Yes, grandmamma.

Lady J. Very well, very well. (Tries the Music to herself.)

Cler. (Painting.) Grandmamma, have you seen my

snuff box!

Lady J. (Without looking.) Yes, there it is, on the table by you.

Cler. Ah, so it is.

Lady J. Clermont! have you never noticed how much

trouble little simple things sometimes give one.

Cler. Aye, that I assure you I have. Little simple things! Those little simple things are they that form the basis, especially in the fine arts. Take care of the minutiæ, and great effect will take care of themselves. The minutiæ are to the artist, what the pence are to the tradesman. If he takes care of the pence, he is sure to grow rich. If an artists would be great, there is no object, however apparently unimportant, that is beneath his notice. Now, you mind that, most sagacious advice giver, and you'll be a great artist one of these days.

Lady J. Well, I didn't ask you to preach a sermon on the occasion. I only know this, that there are two bars here, that are trying my patience, and bye and bye, they'll

put me in a rage—that I know.

Cler. Oh! don't get in a rage, my dear! The conse-

quences might be awful, you know.

Lady J. 1 know very well how they ought to be sung; but a—I can shut my eyes, and hear it in my mind, as it were. But when I attempt to sing them, I can't for my life give the expression. Have you never felt that?

Cler. Oh, yes, I know what you mean.

Lady J. And yet, they're so simple.

Cler. Then why don't you put it by a little time?

Lady J. Um!

Cler. And then perhaps it would come all at once.

Lady J. Well, I think I shall: and you better follow my example, and don't worry yourself. You can't always be in the vein for painting, and yet you will make yourself a slave when there is not the slightest occasion for it.

Cler. I wish that was true. No such good luck for me: if I didn't work, how could you get so many pretty dresses

and shawls and jewels, eh?

Lady J. Ah! now that's very unkind of you: I don't like to hear you talk in that manner, just as if I cared so much about shawls and jewels.

Cler. Why, don't you care about them?

Lady J. Why of course I do, when I can afford to have them without any inconvenience; but I would be just as

happy without them, if we hadn't plenty of money to buy them.

Cler. Oh! no. you wouldn't.

Lady J. Wouldn't 1? That only shows what a poor opinion you have of me.

Cler. Not at all. I think you're a very nice little

ACT 1.

Lady J. But seriously now. I am not jesting. you believe that I would be just as content and just as happy, without all those pretty things, as I am with them?

Cler. Why no, not exactly: it isn't natural that you should be, and you know you are naturally inclined to be

extravagant.

Lady J. 1 extravagant! Now did any one ever hear anything like that? There never was a more prudent and economical creature in the world than 1 am.

Cler. Oh, prudence itself! Havn't you often said, if you had ten thousand a-year, that you would spend it all? Lady J. Certainly; to be sure I would. Wouldn't you?

Cler. I wish some one would try me. I don't think

there'd be much left at the end of the year.

Lady J. What would be the use of hoarding up your money, and living like a miser. If I had twenty thousand a-year, 1'd spend every penny of it. But then, mark you, if I had only two hundred a-year I'd live within my income. That's my philosophy.

Cler. Hum! A philosopher in petticoats.

Lady J. Ah, no matter for that. You think, because we are women, that we know very little.

Cler. I should like to see you try to live on two hundred

a-vear. Lord!

Lady J. Well, I lived very comfortably, very comfortably indeed, before I was married, on four hundred a-year.

Cler. Oh! Aye! Four! But there's a great difference

between four and two.

Lady J. Oh! very well; if you come to that, I could live very comfortably and happily on one hundred a-year, now then.

Cler. I shouldn't like to dine with you very often.

Lady J. Oh, yes; and I'd have a good dinner too. Cler. Then the poor butcher would have to suffer.

Lady J. Oh no, you mistake. The same spirit that would resign me to my state however humble, would give me pride enough to maintain the dignity of a gentlewoman.

Cler. But why so earnest, my little Philosopher?

Lady J. Because I don't like to be called extravagant, when I know I am not. I could mention one though who is extravagant.

Cler. Who? Lady J. You.

Cler. Now I should like to know, how I am extrava-

gant?

Lady J. Why, it was the very height of extravagance in you to give a hundred guineas for a shawl for me the other day.

Cler. Ah, but that was for your birthday, and I'm will-

ing to work to pay for it.

Lady J. But I don't want you to work to pay for it. How you do mistake my happiness! I appreciate, dear Clermont, your affectionate motives; and it may seem ungracious in me to upbraid you, but I do assure you I feel no pleasure in gratifying my vanity by the sacrifice of your health.

Cler. My health!

Lady J. Certainly. Here you are in your painting room, sixteen hours out of the twenty-four, and all for what? To supply me with luxuries and superfluities.

Cler. But it is no punishment to me. I love my art: if you would give me a golden mine, and say, Clermont, now you must not paint any more, I would say, Take your gold; heaven has given me a richer mine—a perfect intellect, an understanding heart! and shall I prove so thankless, so ungrateful to my Creator? Prefer such worldly gifts to all his gifts divine?

Lady J. Then use those gifts, and don't abuse them.

Cler. No, I must paint. 'Tis all my happiness, next to you. Two blessings I only live for: first, I live for you;

next for my art.

Lady J. Then live for me this morning, and give me the honor of your company for an hour or two. I am going to drive as far as Richmond, and shall be happy to have your agreeable society.

Cler. I am your ladyship's most humble and very obedient servant. (Lady J. rings the bell.)

(Enter Francis.

Lady J. Francis, tell them to get the carriage; we're going to Richmond.

Fran. Yes, my lady. A gentleman below desires to

speak to master.

Cler. (Taking the card.) Major Johnson! Who's Major Johnson?

Lady J. I'm sure I've no idea.

Cler. Shew him up. (Exit Francis.)

Lady J. I shall be ready now directly. I suppose you won't be long.

Cler. No, I'm ready.

(Exit Lady Julia R.)

(Re-enter Francis, showing Barrem in, and Exit.)

Bar. Monsieur Clermont, I presume.

Cler. (Bows.)

Bar. (Looking round.) I have come upon rather a disagreeable business. I am a sheriff's officer: its a billaffair. I suppose you are not prepared.

Cler. Then Major Johnson-

Bar. That was merely for the servants. We always like to do these things in the least objectionable manner, and servants will talk, you know, sir.

Cler. I am obliged to you for so much consideration.

What is it all about?

Bar. (Handing a short slip of paper.) That's what I want.

Cler. Quite impossible for me to pay it; what's to be

done?

Bar. You'll have to go with me, sir.

Cler. Where?

Bar. Why that pretty much depends upon yourself. I suppose you'll be able to make some arrangements in a day or two; and for a few days I can let you have a private apartment in my house.

Cler. And where is your house?

Bar. Chancery-lane.

Cler. But I could make arrangements as well by remain-

ing in my own house.

Bar. Why, ha—ha—yes, sir; but you don't seem to be acquainted with the nature of this business. You were never arrested before, I presume.

Cler. Arrested! Never! And am I arrested now?

Bar. Why, yes, sir. Unless you can pay the demand, I shall be compelled to take you. There is no other way.

Cler. Gracious heaven! My poor dear Lady Julia. What can I do? She will be so shocked—it will almost kill her. Couldn't you give me a day or two? I assure you, on my honor, everything shall be arranged to your satisfaction.

Bar. It does not rest with me, sir. Surely you must know that.

Cler. But if I could only conceal it from my wife, I wouldn't care. I'd rather pay five times the sum than she should know it. Can't you take my word and honor?

Bar. What you ask is entirely out of the question.

Cler. Is there no way to conceal it from her? For myself I don't care. But my wife! For twenty thousand pounds I would not have her know it.

Bar. Why sir, there's nothing to distress Mrs. Clermont

so much.

Cler. Ah! But you don't know. She will be so mortified. My good man, could you not go for a little while? My wife is going out immediately, and when she is gone, I will come to you at the end of the street.

Bar. Impossible, sir. I assure you I must be where

you are.

Cler. Any compensation-

Bar. If I could I would, but I can't.

Cler. Do you think I would forfeit my honor?

Bar. This you see, is a large amount, sir. Your best plan will be—

Cler. Hush!

(Enter Lady Julia. She curtsies politely to Barrem: then, aside to Clermont.)

How long before he will go?

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Cler. Oh, directly, I suppose. (Aside.) What a situa-ACT 1. (Lady Julia sits R., and takes a book carelessly.) Major Johnson, you have not seen the picture I am now working at. I want to ask your opinion. (Barrem Now he's going to explain his goes to the easel with him.

Lady J. Oh, dear me!

We shan't get away these two hours.

Lady J. How very provoking, really! I thought we Bar. What is this, sir, here? should have had such a pleasant drive; and now all this

Cler. Ah! I will explain it to you. You see this picbeautiful morning will be lost. ture is from ancient history :-it's a long story, but I will

endeavour to explain it to you as shortly as I can-

Lady J. Clermont! (Impatiently.)

Cler. Ma chere! (Going to her.) Lady J. Can't you give him a hint to go?

Lady J. We shall lose all this fine lovely weather.

Lady J. Tell him you are particularly engaged to drive out with me.

Cler. Yes, yes; after I have explained my picture to

Lady J. Oh no, now at once. He can see your picture to-morrow, or the next day; or any time next week: and him. we may not get such a lovely day as this again for a long time.

Cler. I don't think he will remain long. Lady J. Well, if you won't I will. He can't be offended major! gentlemen of when there's a lady in the case. Major! gentlemen of our profession are always devoted to the ladies, and as my Fusband is engaged to accompany me this morning, I am sure you will excuse him.

Bar. Why, ma'am, I will do anything that I can, but I ink Mr. Chy, ma'am, I will do anything that I can, but I Think Mr. Clermont had better inform you—nho I am.

Lady J. Why—what?

Cler. AL

What's the matter? You terrify Cler. Ah, mon dieu! Lady J. Clermont!

Cler. Ma chere, I am arrested!

Lady J. Arrested!

Cler. This gentleman is an officer.

Lady J. Arrested!

Cler. I wish I had never been born, that I should cause

you so much misery. Ah! it is that.

Lady J. But calm yourself, my dear Clermont. Let us see what arrangements can be made. I have a little money. How much is the debt?

Bar. Right hundred pounds, ma'am.

Lady J. Gracious! What's to be done? Well, we must have some time to consider. Can you give us a few days?

Bar. I'll have to take your husband, ma'am.

Lady J. Where? To prison? Then I go with him. Cler. No! no! no! my dear! Oh heaven! That

would add to my torture!

Lady J. 1 should be miserable to be away from you.

Cler. You in a prison! Oh, no, no, no!

Lady J. What odds! so long as I am with you?

Cler. What have I done, that I should suffer so much misery?

Bar. It would be better, ma'am, to let him go alone.

Lady J. Oh no, oh no! I could not listen to it. If he were left alone, and in a prison! Oh no! He never could endure it! His sufferings would be too great! Something desperate would happen.

Bar. You need not be separated from him more than

three or four days, perhaps, ma'am.

Lady J. 'Tis useless talking. My mind's made up. If you take him to prison, I go with him.

(Enter Francis.)

Fran. The Duke of Barnstour.

Lady. J. (Aside.) Heavens! How mortifying that the Duke should know of this!

(Enter Duke. Barrem retires up.)

Duke. Lady Julia, good morning. What lovely weather! How do, Clermont? Well, you weren't at the opera last night, to see my fair protagée.

Cler. No, but we intend to go on Saturday. Had she a good success?

Duke. Oh tremendous! She sang like an angel! Have

you seen The Times this morning?

Lady J. By the bye, yes; indeed, they do praise her up to the skies.

Duke. They havn't said a word too much.

Cler. And yet she failed in Paris.

Duke. A good reason why. A clique against her. She was sacrificed, and most probably would have been in London, if it hadn't been (though I say it who perhaps ought not to say it) if it hadn't been for me.

Cler. But if she really has talent!

Duke. Talent! My dear fellow! What's the use of talent, or genius either, unless it has a fair chance. How many of our greatest artists have failed in the first instance, merely for want of tact? What does a poor young creature, who was never behind the scenes of a theatre, know of all the thousand things that are necessary to ensure success? There's a way to manage these things; and I flatter myself I am up to all the dodges in the theatrical world, eh?

Lady J. You ought to be, surely; for youv'e had ex-

perience enough in those matters.

Duke. Yes, some few years. But then, its my hobby, you know. Every man must have a hobby of some sort or other. That puts me in mind of my business here this morning. She is going to rehearse a scene at my house, from a MS. Opera, theyr'e going to bring out now immediately: and I want you, Lady Julia, to hear her in private, before you hear her on the stage. So you and Clermont must come: it's two o'clock—she is to be there at half-past. Come Clermont, get ready, and we'll be off at once.

Cler. I hope your grace will excuse us this morning.

Our friend-

Duke. Your friend! Who's your friend? Bring your friend with you.

Cler. Major—(Barrem turns round.)

Duke. Eh! What's this? Barrem! (Lady J. sinks in a chair. Clermont seems bewildered.)

Duke. (After a pause.) Lady Julia—(Lady Julia makes no renly; covers her face with her handkerchief.) Lady

Julia, would you oblige me by retiring? (The Duke takes Lady J.'s hand, she still having her face covered, and leads her off R. H.

Duke. Barrem, what's the matter?

Bar. (Shews a paper, and whispers to the Duke.)

Duke. Clermont, my dear fellow, you must allow me to act as your friend.

Cler. Ah, Mons. le Duc!

Duke. Why didn't you apply to me? Barrem, I'll settle this. Call at my house this afternoon or to-morrow.

Bar. I will, your grace. (Exit Barrem.)
Duke. You should have acquainted me, Clermont, with

Duke. You should have acquainted me, Clermont, with the state of your affairs.

Cler. But what right? What claim had I to-

Duke. Why you surely must be aware that I cannot help feeling the strongest interest in the welfare of Lady Julia.

Cler. I was not aware that there is any particular reason

why you should.

Duke. Really! You surprise me. Has Lady Julia never acquainted you, then, of the great intimacy that formerly existed between our families?

Cler. Never, that I remember.

Duke. That's strange! Oh, yes; our intimacy at one time was particularly strong. There were, however, circumstances which prevented its continuance—very much to my sorrow though, I assure you. Her father was the dearest friend I ever had—I wonder Lady Julia never named it to you.

Cler. She never did.

Duke. Such, however, is the truth. The many acts of kindness I have received at her father's hands; the sincere friendship—indeed, I say it without hesitation—the more than friendship I have ever felt for Lady Julia, must account to you for my readiness to assist you in your present emergency.

Cler. I assure you, Mons. le Duc, that I am thankful for your distinguished friendship, and I hope that I shall not long remain your debtor: that is, in a pecuniary matter. For your great kindness now, no matter how great my future success may be, I hope I shall ever feel how much I

owe you.

Duke. Don't mention it, my dear fellow. Is there anything else I can do for you? How did this happen?

Cler. By placing too great a reliance on the promises of

Count Strongonoff.

Duke. What, the agent of the Emperor of Russia!

Cler. The same. The Emperor of Russia commanded him to have two pictures painted for his palace in St. Petersburgh, either by me or by two other artists; one in Paris, the other in London; and to advance one-third of the cost upon giving the order. The cost of these pictures would be £2000 each. The Count has the Emperor's carte blanche, and he has repeatedly, for the last twelve months, promised to give me the order for both the pictures; but as yet he has not thought fit to fulfil his promise, which I relying on, have anticipated my means.

Duke, How very singular! Why I dined in company with the Count last evening. We were talking among other things of your pictures; and he told me that he had

already given you this identical order.

Cler. It is not true. The Count has not behaved well to me. He has given me no order; or I should not to-day have been so disgraced.

Duke. Then certainly he intends to. However, I will

see him on the subject, and use all my interest.

Cler. Ah, Mons, le Duc, how can I ever requite such kindness?

Duke. Nonsense! I'll tell you how you may requite it. I am going to have some friends at the Castle in the shooting season; now will you honor me with your company, and persuade Lady Julia to spend a month with me, and preside over my household?

Cler. So much goodness! You may rely upon it we

will come.

Duke. You'll make me more than happy. Well, I'll lose no time. I'll call upon the Count at once; and as soon as I have seen him, I'll return and let you know what's to be done. (Exit.)

Cler. How unfortunate that I could not keep Lady Julia in ignorance of this! How kind of the Duke! What could I have done, if it had not been for him? Good heavens, when I think of it! For Lady Julia would have

cone to prison with me! What a situation! God bless the Duke! Ah, mon Dieu! Here comes Lady Julia. I never felt so miserable in my life! What can I say to her?

(Enter Lady Julia.)

Lady J. Clermont! How could you shock me so? Why have you lived beyond your means? Believe me, I feel mortified beyond expression. I knew the Duke would immediately insist on giving you his aid; and at the moment, I felt I had no power to interpose. Why have you kept me ignorant of your position?

Cler. My dear Julia! All I have done was to promote your happiness. You know, ma belle, that the first wish of my heart is to gratify every desire of yours; and if I

have failed, you will not censure me.

Lady J. Censure you! Have I ever censured you? Even when I thought you rich, and shall I now when I know that you are poor? No, no, Clermont, mon ami. However much your indiscretion may cause me sorrow and regret, I am very sure no action of your life will render you liable to my censure. In sorrow then, in sadness, in love and in affection, let me ask you why you have tried to keep up an establishment so very far, I am sure, beyond your means.

Cler. It was my pride and my ambition, and it was my duty too. Am I not sensible what a wife I have? No common wife! A gem! Such little wives are rare, and not to be met with every day; and have I done wrong to try to prove myself a worthy possessor of such a prize.

Lady J. You have only erred in judgment, Clermont. You have done wrong only, by not taking the right means. Cler. I had no other means of giving you all you ought

to have, than to-

Lady J. Why ought I to have more than you could

easily afford?

Cler. Were you not born and bred in luxury? Have not all the wishes of your heart, even from a child, been studiously observed by all around you. The darling child of an indulgent father, had you a whim or fancy that was not pleased? Am I not then bound by every principle of

honor and affection, to strain every nerve to give you at

least all common necessaries?

Lady J. Necessaries! But I have luxuries in profusion: more than I ever had before. Believe me, dear Clermont, till I became your wife I never knew what luxury was (comparatively).

Cler. It is your nobleness to say so.

Lady J. 'Tis true, believe me! Our family, though very old and very proud, was never wealthy. Simplicity was all we wished—was all we coveted, and what family ever more was honored? And heaven be praised, we were not honored for our wealth! No, Clermont, think what you please; say what you will; "virtue is the true nobility" after all.

Cler. Yes, you are right.

Lady J. I am sure I am; therefore we will change our mode of living altogether.

Cler. I am afraid we can't do that. An artist must keep

up appearances, you know.

Lady J. Keep up appearances! Well, keep them up: there can be no objection. Keep them up, as dashing as you please, but keep them up yourself.

Cler. Myself! Lady J. Yourself!

Cler. What do you mean?

Lady J. Why to keep up your appearances, do not indulge in luxuries you can't afford, and make the honest tradesman who supplies you pay for them.

Cler. But, my dear, you do not understand-

Lady J. 1 understand sufficient—and I know full well that if you live beyond your means, the consequence must be disgrace.

Cler. But I have only lived consistently with the station

of my wife-with just regard to her nobility.

Lady J. You have run into debt, and been arrested-

there's no nobility in that.

Cler. That was an accident, which never again shall happen. The Count Strongonoff deceived me. He promised me his friendship, and has broken his word. But we have found a better friend in the good Duke, who has offered me his services in any way I may require.

Lady J. But you cannot accept the services of the Duke.

Cler. Eh! Comment donc!

Lady J. There are circumstances which bar the propriety

of your receiving favours from the Duke.

Cler. Bar the propriety! I do not comprehend. He told me he was formerly most intimate with your family, and that your father was the kindest friend he ever had.

Lady J. Perfectly true.

Cler. The Duke, then, must be an honorable man.

Lady J. I believe him honorable—highly so.

Cler. Then as it was the Duke who offered, without my asking, where can the impropriety be, in my accepting of his kindness?

Lady J. Inasmuch, as it would not be (if you will take my word for it)—(hesitates)—it would not be—a—a—

Cler. What?

Lady J. It would not be consistent—with your happiness.

Cler. There seems a mystery—but I will not be too exacting. If you would rather keep the secret from me—

Lady J. Now you are displeased-

Cler. No, not at all; but if I am in a false position with the Duke, why not acquaint me, that I may the better act in unison with your feelings?

Lady J. Why then—the Duke—once loved me.

Cler. Ah! Now I see! And you?

Lady J. I?

Cler. Did you love him? Lady J. What a question!

Cler. Not even a little?

Lady J. A little!

Cler. You might.

Lady J. If a little, why not much?

Cler. You might.

Lady J. Why marry you then, and not him?

Cler. And in his stead, you married me!

Lady J. Not in his stead. I married you because I loved you. Because I did not love the Duke—why, I refused the offer of his hand. There! Now you know the entire secret.

Cler. Why did you never tell me this before?

Lady J. It more became me, I imagined, not to; and would not now but for present matters.

Cler. But women commonly do not keep such matters

secret.

Lady J. You said just now, I was "no common wo-

Cler. Nor are you! Not even to mention it, or hist it.

Lady J. Never before have I to a single soul! And had the Duke have kept his counsel better, none would have known the honor that he paid me; but in a fit of momentary vexation, he himself mentioned it to Isabella.

Cler. Now then my eyes are opened. No doubt he

loves you now as much as ever.

Lady J. That I can't answer: but let him not renew his intimacy. Twere best for him, for you, for me, for all of us—we must find means immediately to discharge our obligation to him.

Cler. Immediately we cannot—but in six months or so— Lady J. No, no; at once. Sell all my jewels, costly shawls—our carriages—everything. We'll make a change—live as we ought. However poor, for heaven's sake, let us be independent.

Cler. Eh, mon Dieu! How can a lady of your rank— Lady J. Rank! rank! None deserve rank, dear Clermont, who are ashamed of honest poverty. My rank! Why what a delusion! Your rank is my rank. What's a wife good for, who thinks her husband her inferior? Have I been blest by noble birth? Why you are blest with genius! Mine, a distinction made by man! Yours, an attribute bestowed by heaven! Which is the noblest?

Cler. Nothing can be nobler than you!

Lady J. I am an Artist's Wife!—Sensible of the duties of my station. Heaven sent me to be a blessing to you, Clermont, and heaven forbid that I should be a burden.

Cler. Mon ange! But let me try for one year more, and you will see. We need not make such sacrifice as you

propose.

Lady J. Oh no! Now come, do let me have my way: do, my dear Clermont, only once take Grandmamma's advice.

Cler. All those rich presents that I worked so hard to give you—and your jewels too—oh, no, I cannot consent.

Lady J. What do I want with jewels? Do you not love me more than all the world? Don't you adore the very ground I tread on?

Cler. Ah!

Lady J. Very well! What richer jewel than your love can I desire? All other jewels any one can have: when we grow rich, why we can purchase others just as good.

Cler. But every one will think-

Lady J. Who cares a pin what anybody thinks? Let them think what they please. Poverty's no crime.

Cler. No, but as we say in France-"Tis something

worse."

Lady J. When we deserve it, it may be as bad.

(Enter Francis.)

Fran. The carriage is at the door. (Exit.)

Cler. Ah! very well. Come, ma petite, we will take a pleasant drive, and then perhaps we may devise some means to get through all our troubles.

Lady J. A drive! Clermont, that's not my plan. We

can't afford to keep our carriage—we will walk.

Cler. Walk!

Lady J. I'll never put my foot inside of it, until we have a proper right to keep it.

Cler. If every one who keeps a carriage thought as you,

what a few carriages there would be!

Lady J. What others do is no concern of ours. Let us

do right.

Cler. You can't do wrong. Yes, "Virtue is the true nobility" after all. We will walk; and we shall not feel humbled.

Lady J. Humbled!

Cler. With virtuous minds and noble purposes, we'll walk—and hold up our heads as high—

Lady J. And feel as proud-

Cler. As Lucifer! Lady J. Prouder!

Cler. As proud-

Lady J. As any other honest people. (Exit.)

Cler. What a sound lesson this young thing has taught me! I am convinced there is no royal road to happiness! 'Tis in the reach of all—poor as well as rich—humble as well as great! The golden rule, "Do right!" Would you be happy, take honesty by the hand, walk arm-in-arm with her; hold up your head, and do not be ashamed of your companion.

Duke. (Without.) Oh! very well! No matter now. I only want to say a word to Monsieur Clermont. (Enters.) Well, Clermont, my boy, all right. I've settled with Barrem. The fellow was waiting for me at the door. I've seen the Count too: he says he thought you

had the order.

Cler. There's no dependance on the Count! He knows he hasn't given me the order; and what is more, I do not

think that he intends it.

Duke. Well, never mind him: I'll see that everything's arranged, depend on me. By the bye, we are going to have our rehearsal this evening, instead of at half-past two. Won't you and Lady Julia dine with me? We shall be all alone, and-

Cler. Why, I am sorry-

Duke. Sorry!

Cler. Since your Grace eft us, Lady Julia has informed me of your former friendship. I regret extremely, M. le Duc, the a-nature of your friendship-a-will and must preclude_

Duke. Preclude!

Cler. Believe me, Mons. le Duc, I shall always remem-Ber with gratitude, the kindnesss you have done us, and no one can regret more than I the circumstances which prohibits the renewal of your former intimacy.

Duke. And is it possible that till to-day you never heard

from Lady Julia,-

Cler. Never, I assure you, till to-day. We both regret

that a friend whom we esteem so much-

Duke. I think though, by the bye, it is an odd way of shewing your esteem—protesting against the intimacy of your friend.

Cler. Mons. le Duc! I hope you are not offended-24.

you certainly, upon reflection, must approve of our determination.

Duke. Can't say I do; no man on earth can feel a greater interest for the welfare and happiness of Lady Julia than I.

Cler. Of that I feel persuaded-perfectly convinced-

and whence arises this great interest?

Dake. Why from esteem—respect—an—affectionate regard—

Cler. And love!

Duke. I don't deuy it, Clermont. She is the only woman that I ever loved, and never will I love another with such—I may say, religious veneration! Then why, for that sincerity we all so anxiously hope for in our friends, am I to be rejected?

Cler. Because we would preserve inviolate that sincerity. It would not be for Lady Julia's happiness, nor for yours,

my Lord Duke, nor for my honor.

Duke. I see, I see, my dear fellow: a word to the wise. Then rely upon my honor. I promise you, I will withdraw myself from your society, and that of Lady Julia, from this day forth, nor will I make the attempt to renew my intimacy, unless I be solicited by you both.

Cler. I am over-grateful to you.

Duke. Prove it, by assuring me, that should you ever want a friend, you will apply to me, before all others.

Cler. I pledge my word-we will.

Duke. Adieu!

Cler. Adieu! cher Duc—Adieu! (Exit Duke.) Poor Duke! Happy Clermont! With all his wealth and brilliant title! Few women would have done so! What a treasure I possess! Talk of man's valour! 'Tis woman's love encourages him to deeds of chivalry.

Song.

Le Vaillant Tronbadour.

(Enter Francis.)

Fran. The Count Strongonoff has sent his servant with a message which he wishes to deliver to you personately.

Cler. Let him come in.

(Francis shews in Count's servant.)

Servant. This letter my master commanded me to deliver to Mons. Clermont.

Cler. My compliments to the Count. (Exit Servant.) Now let's see what smooth excuse the Count will offer. (Opens letter.) Ha! I ask pardon of the Count. I have condemned him too quickly. The order for both pictures, and a cheque in advance. Bravo! Fortune favours the brave. Ah, ha! my little wife will keep her carriage! She'll keep her jewels too I fancy. Poverty! Phew! Why should I dread poverty, while I have a bank to draw upon? My art is my bank, that will never fail me. My house may burn, all around me may be destroyed, but my art no one can deprive me of: that I can possess in spite of misfortune, in spite of adversity—in spite of Fate itself!!! (As he pronounces the words FATE ITSELF, a vivid flash of lightning—mith a loud roar of thunder,—strikes him Blind! The easel is knocked down, and several images are broken, &c., &c.

Cler. Ah, mon Dieu! François! Isabella! (Enter Francis and Isabella running. They go up to him, and are

dumb with astonishment.)

(Enter Lady Julia in very high spirits,) singing—
"Gaily the bells are ringing—
"Sweetly the birds are singing."

Cler. Ah! Julie!

Lady J. Clermont! What's the matter?

Cler. Fate! Fate! Fate! Has done its worst! Lost for ever! Oh, Julie! I am blind!!! (Lady Julia shrieks, falls in his arms. Francis and Isabella support him. Curtain falls.)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

(Enter Francis, followed by Isabella.)

Fran. I don't care, Hisabella, anything at all about what you say. I don't think its right!

Isab. What right have you to think, you foolish fellow?

Fran. No matter for that. I am sure you are doing very wrong, and I am doing very wrong, and Lady Julia is

doing very wrong.

Isab. Now, Master Francis, let me give you a little bit of advice. I don't care what you think about me, or what you think about yourself; but if you dare to say one word about Lady Julia, you and I will quarrel.

Fran. But only look at the state of affairs.

Isab. Mind your own business, and don't meddle with other people's.

Fran. Ah! it's a hard thing to have a soft heart.

Isab. Its a bad thing to have a soft head.

Fran. O! I know you think I am a fool.

Isab. You are quite mistaken; I don't thinh anything about the matter.

Fran. Well, I may be a fool! And if I am, I am thankful for it, so long as I'm honorable and trustless.

Isab. Ah! Frank, you have got a great deal to be thankful for, so why can't you be contented?

Fran. Because I can't a bear to see my poor master so deceived.

Isab. He is not deceived.

Fran. Then why are you afraid to tell him that the Duke comes every day to visit Lady Julia?

Isab. Because its no business of mine—nor of yours.

Fran. I beg to participate in your opinion. It is my business; and my conscience tells me that I ought to mis-

direct poor Master—a poor, blind, helpful man. two years now, and yet never do you hear a murmur from his thankless lips. Don't that speak wolumes for his good-Although suffering under such a bitter reflection, still he's always singing-always cheerful-always gay. Don't that show the innocence and impiety of his heart?

Isab. Then, if he is so happy, why would you tell him

anything you thought would make him miserable?

Fran. Cause its my dooty! And I will do my dooty, if all the world deserts poor master! I'll be his friend-I'll stick to him, as one genius will stick to another.

Isab. You a genius! You're a fool!

Fran. In course I am. Did you ever know a genius

that wasn't a fool?

Isab. Well, if you are fool enough to contradict my will, and say a single word to Master about the Duke, you never need to think of marrying me. I'll marry some one else-I don't care who—as sure as my name's Isabella.

Fran. You seem to know your power. I am dumb-

I wish 1 could understand—

Isab. There's very little you can understand; and I doubt very much if you really understand that little. So let me caution you to hold your tongue about the Duke. ever happens, happens for the best. You've often heard poor Master say so, havn't you?

Fran. I can't deny it.

Isab. Well then, the Duke, in being Lady Julia's friend, -but there's no use in my explaining things to you. in good time you'll know, and so will Master, all about it. So trust to me, and you shall not repent it.

Fran. Well! As our great Irish bard Voltaire expresses it-" Woman is a mystery !!" There certainly is a great change in Lady Julia since her poor husband has been blind. She's gayer now than ever. I never saw the like. the last six months, she's done nothing but singing all day The very first thing after breakfast, she begins with them Eyetalian Hoperas, and plays music on the piany, as if the house was coming down. And then she goes to parties too, and dresses handsomer than she used to. I says nothing ... I says nothing! That don't prevent me thinking, though. If the Dook's coming here so constantly

aint wrong, why don't they let poor master know about it? That's the question I would perpetuate! But then, as Hisabella says, why tell him what would make him miserable? He's blind, and don't see nothing, and seems as happy as the day is long, poor man! Perhaps it may be for the best. Yes, Robert Burns was right, I think. Its in his Arabian Nights Entertainments, where he says—

" He that's robbed of anything he doesn't want,

" If he aint conscious he aint lost nothing.

" What good is there in tellin him."

(Exit very tragically.)

SCENE 11.—A handsome Furnished Room at Clermont's.

(Lady Julia and the Duke discovered, seated.)

Duke. What a talk it will make!

Lady J. Well, people must talk—that's all.

Duke. All I hope, my dear Julia, is that you will be firm.

Lady J. I have given you my promise, have I not?

Duke. Yes, but woman is privileged to break her promises; and you so very often avail yourselves of your pre-

rogative.

Lady J. It shall not be the case with me. Before I promised you, I fully weighed the consequences of the step I am about to take. My family and relations may discard me, if they will—and they will, no doubt—I am prepared for it; but my want and sufferings have been greater than I can bear. So let them disown me, I must seek friends elsewhere.

Duke. But why speak so despondingly. What need of

seeking friends while I am near?

Lady J. I didn't mean it. I know I can depend on you. Assuredly, I have no fear that you will ever desert me.

Duke. That's certain. When I desert you, Lady Julia, I must cease to live. But how the world will talk! How

things do come to pass! Well, time will show. You promise not to disappoint me.

Lady J. As I rely on you, do you rely on me.

Duke. I will, by all that's lovely. I am sure you'll prove a trump. (Clermont sings without.)

Lady J. Dear me? Here's Clermont. Its curious, but

I have never known him in better spirits than to-day.

Duke. Well then, Lady Julia-

Lady J. Hush! (Makes signs to the Duke to go. Clermont enters, led on by Isabella. The Duke passes out on tiptoe by the same door, kissing his hand to Lady Julia. Lady J. goes off through the door, second entrance, left. Clermont hums a lively air, as Isabella leads him to the front of the stage.)

Isab. What cheerful spirits you are in. I wish every-

body in the world was as happy as you are.

Cler. With all my heart I wish they were.

Isab. But you deserve to be happy. For you never repine, nor murmur, nor—really, most people with your affiction, would be so miserable, and make everybody miserable around them.

Cler. More fools they! Why should I repine? Would that make me see the better? Parbleu! If it would restore my sight, I would grumble all day long!

Isab. No, but very few would have your philosophy.

Cler. Philosophy! Ah, Isabella, it is more than philosophy—it is humility—a patient submission—a ready acknowledgment of the mercy of the Great Being, who knows better than we do what is best for us.

Isab. Yours is a happy temperament—under the severest

affliction man can suffer—

Cler. No, not the severest! My affliction might have been much greater.

Isab. You surely don't mean that!

Cler. It might have been a thousand times severer.

Isab. Well, you surprise me! Can anything be dearer

than one's sight?

Cler. I have lost my sight! But is not Lady Julia left to bless me? My sight was dear to me, but is she not dearer a thousand times than my sight? So you see, I have a great deal to be thankful for. Besides, I still have hope!

(Re-enter Lady Julia from door L. H.)

Isab. Have you indeed? You really think your sight will be restored?

Cler. Yes; sometimes I think so: and I think so to-day more than ever, for I had such a happy dream last night! Ah! Isabella, what a happiness is hope! If pleasure is a rose, hope is the rosebud.

Song.

Esperance!

(During the Song, Lady Julia makes signs to Isabella to lead Clermont away. At the end of the Song)— Isab. Come, sir, shall we go and see where Lady Julia

Cler. Oh, I know where she is, and I can find her without you. (Exit, singing, R.)

Lady J. Oh! Isabella, what a fright you put me in! Why didn't you let me know that Clermont was so near? what would have become of me; if he had happened to have heard the Duke's voice?

Isab. Why, really, my Lady, I could not help it. I assure you it was no fault of mine. I found him coming down stairs, and how he got out of his room, without my seeing him, I am at a loss to imagine, for I have been keeping watch ever since the Duke has been here.

Lady J. Dear me! It has given me such a shock. I almost wish I never had determined on this desperate act!

Isab. Well really, I don't think there's any thing so

very desperate in the act.

Lady J. Oh! Isabella! I shudder at the thoughts of it! Isab. I am sure, my lady, anything is better than living in such poverty and misery as you have of late. I only wish that I had such a chance. I see nothing desperate or disgraceful in it, unless it's a disgrace to fly from poverty to riches. What need you mind what people say?

Lady J. I don't!

Isab. Of course not; let them say what they please. As long as you have got plenty of money, it's easy enough to make them hold their tongues. Money'll do anything.

Lady J. But then-

Isab. Now, my Lady, you must not be faint-hearted! The Duke will be so disappointed: and you know you gave him your word of honour that would not disappoint him.

Lady J. Nor will I! Come, my mind's made up; are

my dresses all packed up?

Isab. Every thing is ready. You have nothing but to step into the carriage when the Duke comes for you.

Clermont. (without.) Julie, ma chere.

Lady J. Oui, mon ami!

(Enter Clermont, R.)

Cler. I have been hunting all about to find you mechante!

Isab. I long to hear your happy dream last night.

Cler. Oh! It was such a happy dream! But no one shall hear my dream but you (to Lady Julia.)

Isab. Oh very well! 1 understand. A gentle hint for me to leave the room. (Exit.)

Lady J. What was this happy dream?

Cler. I dreamt, my sight was perfectly restored. I thought you looked more beautiful than ever; that we were at a dance; and that the Duke was dancing with you, and I did not feel jealous.

Lady J. Why should you ever have felt jealous of the

Duke?

Cler. Because I could not help it. The Duke has caused more misery to me than anything on earth. His very name gives me the heart-ache. I am sorry for it, because it seems ungrateful on my part, but still I cannot help it.

Lady J. You ought to try and overcome such feelings,

they're unjust.

Cler. 1 hope they are!

Lady J. Don't you know they are?

Cler. Well, I don't know!—why should I feel this strange abhorrence?

Lady J. I'm sure the Duke would prove as true a friend to you, if ever you should require it.

Cler. Yes, for your sake! My friend, because you are

my wife. Oh! The very thought appals me! He cannot be my friend. I cannot feel that he is such.

Lady J. You wrong him, Clermont.

Cler. What? (Warmly.)

Lady J. I say you do the Duke a great injustice.

Cler. Julie! Ma chere! Don't speak to me in such a strain about the Duke! How you are changed! 'twas you yourself who said there was a "Bar"! A Bar! to my receiving favours from the Duke; and now you seem to say there is no "Bar"!

Lady J. But a change in position and in circumstance warrants a change in sentiments and demeanour. What

might be wrong in one, in another might be right.

Cler. I am not casuist enough to think so.

Lady J. You will not think so—in this case—
"He that's convinced against his will

" Is of the same opinion still."

Cler. Tis true !—I must have something more than mere assurance. In a point of honour, when the affections, where the passions were not excited, I would trust the Duke: for instance, he gave me his word of honor that he would withdraw himself from your society. I believe, indeed I know, he never would attempt to see you; knowing, as he does, my feelings, and his own. Nay, more, I am convinced, if he should chance to meet you in society, he would avoid you. The Duke himself feels how imperative such line of conduct is, as well as I. He'll keep his honor—but would not dare to trust his passion.

Lady J. Relying then so implicitly on his honour as you do, why do you give yourself so much uneasiness, unne-

cessarily?

Cler. Hah! My thoughts and my imagination will controul me—sometimes I fancy that the Duke is here, having a private interview with you—(The Duke and Isabella appear)—and then I fancy you don't love me as you used to.

Lady J. But that is very wrong, and wicked too. (The

Duke writes on a card.)

Cler. Yes, and that it is that so much vexes me. Because I know how good you are. I know that you are purity itself—that you would rather die than to deceive

ACT II.

ne. And when I know so well that if I could not trust

the Duke, yet here is one I can trust. Here is a friend that never will desert me. That if the Duke were so disposed, that you would not encour-

(Isabella brings the card from the Duke, on tiptoe, and gives it to Lady Julia. She reads it, turns round, and nods assent to the Duke. The Duke shows his watch and retires.

age him, nor speak to him, nor even see him, would you? (Isabella goes into room, L. H.)

Lady J. Eh?

Cler. If he were to solicit it, would you consent to see him?

Lady J. Do you doubt me, that you can ask?

Cler. Oh, no! no! Not for a moment do I doubt you. But then I have such strange presentiments about the Duke.

Lady J. But what should make you fancy that I don't

love you as I used to?

Cler. See what trouble I have been to you. How much you have suffered for my sake! How much you suffer now,

almost reduced to beggary!

Lady J. Beggary! No, Clermont. That's too strong a term. We are poor enough, I must acknowledge; and to deal candidly, unless we get relief some way or other, we'll have to change these lodgings for some humbler ones, for I cannot, with all economy, make our little money meet expenses.

Cler. Ha! mon Dieu! And I have brought you to this

wretched state.

Lady J. Never mind, Clermont, let's live in hope.

Cler. Yes, it is strange; but I have hope (Isabella comes out of the room stealthily, with a Dressing-case: goes to centre door, where the Duke meets her. She gives him the Dressing-case: he hands it to some one behind. Isabella returns to the room.) So let us be happy while we hope. This evening we will have some music. Come, you shall sing me all your favorite music.

Lady J. I hardly think that I can sing to-night, Clermont. I have such a headache, and have had it all day long.

Cler. Pauvre petite! Then go and repose a little while.

An hour's sleep or two is your best remedy. What o'clock is it?

Lady J. 'Tis almost eight.

(Isabella comes out of room, with shawl, &c., &c., and seems impatient for Lady Julia.)

Cler. And when it is time for you to wake, I'll come

and serenade with my Clarinette.

Lady J. How fortunate! (Aside.) I think I will lie

down. If I wake up in time, we'll have some music.

Cler. Bien, Bien, ma Petite a little sleep is sure to do you good.—(He kisses her. She pretends to go into her room. Isabella puts Bonnet and Shawl on her. The Duke gives her his arm, and they go off stealthily, Isabella following.) Quel Ange! Quel Ange! Quel Ange! Quel Ange! Yes, a wise providence has stung me with a most bitter affliction; but in the midst of my suffering, he has awakened my heart to his great mercy. He has given me an Angel to solace me—an Angel for me to solace. Chere Julie.

ROMANCE.

Quel autre pourrait me plaire, Antant que toi, L'air a ma vie est necessaire, Bien moins que toi.

Je sens trop que mon existence, Ne tient qu' a toi, Avec toi tout est Jonissance, Et rien sans toi.

(Exit.)

SCENE II.—A Room at Clermont's.

(Enter Francis and Rogers.)

Fran. I don't care anything about what you say, Rogers; that don't alter my duplicity. My opinion on the subject is just as strong and transitory as ever, and I'll stick to it.

Rogers. Well now, come, we'll protract all joking on the matter, and be serious. What is your real opinion on marriage facility?

Fron. Why I think there can be no manner of doubt on the infraction, that there is no evasion more happier than

connubial marriage.

Rogers. Well, really, I must take the liberty of assenting entirely against your opinion, and protesting my affirmative: for, as we say in the House of Lords—excuse me using Latin—non fit.

Fran. Fit! Oh, certainly, in that case I am perfectly of your insolvency. If a man aint fit, the case becomes immutable, and my opinion's altered very greatly. But I am fit, and all that I am anxious for is to be well fitted.

Rogers. Well, we shan't quarrel, Frank, about the matter. The subject is merely a parliamentary one. Whether marriage or celebrity irrigates most happiness? (Takes snuff affectedly.)

Fran. Lets have some of your snuff. (Takes snuff.)

Where do you get this stuff.

Rogers. Stuff!

Fran. Snuff: I beg your pardon.

Rogers. Oh! Fribourg, Haymarket, is my surveyor.

Fran. 1 get mine from Edinburgh.

Rogers. Scotch! What dem bad taste you must have. Fran. That may be. I wouldn't change my taste for yours, though. Not if I have to take your snuff.

Rogers. I can't admire your politeness or your manners.

Fran. What's the reason you can't?

Rogers. Why, they're both dem'd immaculate.

Fran. But we won't quarrel about a pinch of snuff.

Rogers. No apology—there's my hand. Vivant Rex, as we say in the House.

Fran. Wiwant Rex! What is that?

Rogers. Long live the Queen!

Fran. With all my heart. Wiwant Rex—the longer the better. By the bye, I wanted to have got out to-day,

to have had a peep at the Drawing Room.

Rogers. Very crowded! Very brilliant! The most brilliant Drawing Room we've had for years! If youv'e a a mind, I can take you to the opera this evening. I have some tickets for the gallery. Should you like to go? All the Court'll be there.

Fran. What time are you going?

Rogers. It 'll be rather latish—ten, or thereabouts. I

SCENE III.

can't go earlier.

Fran. That'll suit me better. I think I cau manage to get out about that time for an hour or so. I'm excessive fond of the opera.

Rogers. 'Specially on a Drawing Room night. I like

to see the feathers waving in all the boxes.

Fran. Ah, I thought you were a ladies' man, after all,

Rogers.

Rogers. A ladies' man! But not a marrying man.

Fran. Ah, that's the way with you handsome fellows! For my part, I'm a marrying man; but Hisabella's art's as hard as stone. As Buckstone says, in his Paradise Lost,—I think its Buckstone, or Sterne! or some of their cotempories, (pretending to woman's unfeelingness) what says—

Friend of my soul! Come taste of this!

No crystral brook is clearer.

Tis not so sweet as woman's kiss,

But, oh! 'tis more sincerer.

So you're not a marrying man. I see; you follow the Duke's example. Like master like man, Rogers. What a gay fellow the Duke is though, isn't he?

Rogers. We can't complain—we're very successful both of us. By the bye, that puts me in mind of a little engagement. Be down about ten, and I'll take you in.

Fran. I'll make it a pint. Fact is, the opera is the only theatre worth intolerance. For my part, I never wisits any other.

Rogers. I sometimes look in at the French plays for a

few minutes.

Fran. Yes, them and the opera is quite a treat. What a spleudid actor Scribe is! As for our English theatres, I quite sets my face against 'em.

Rogers. Our actors are so bad—can't account for it.

Fran. I kin: they wants paternage.

Rogers. Wish they may get it.

Fran. No chance for them, while we have such good French advertissements. I wish I understood French. You understands it well, don't you, Rogers?

Rogers. Tolerably: I'm larning it now from our Swish.

I've taken two lessons. Going to take four more to finish me.

Fran. What do you pay?

Rogers. Sixpence a lesson.

Fran. Rather expensive! these free-trade times. By the bye, what's the French for God save the Queen?

Rogers. Honny swoy ke mally pence.

Fran. Honny swoy-

Rogers. Ke mally pence.

Fran. Ke mally pence. Honny swoy ke mally pence! I intend to sing out that to night at the opera. Where shall we meet?

Rogers. Opera Colonnade. Ten-don't be later.

Fran. I'll make it a pint.

Rogers. Oh river (au revoir). (Exit.)

Fran. Oh river! What's oh river, I wonder? Oh river! Well, I can't make that out. Stop a bit. Aye, aye! It must be the name of some Italian song they're going to sing to night. Honny swoy ke mally pence! Honny swoy ke mally pence! Honny swoy ke mally pence! If they don't hear my woice at the Opera to-night, I'm a Dutchman.

(Enter Mrs. Peeper L. H.)

Fran. Well, Mrs. Peeper, what makes you look so

Mrs. P. I've enough to make me look glum. I don't

like sich goings on in my house.

Fran. Don't you?
Mrs. P. No, I don't.

Fran. What goings on?

Mrs. P. Why, I don't want to say nothing what's libellous. But if I do keep a lodging house, I intend to have respectful lodgers.

Fran. You'd better keep a quiet tongue in your head, Mrs. Peeper—that's my advice to you. Else you'll get

vourself into trouble.

Mrs. P. Will I, Mr. Noodle?

Fran. Yes, and before you know it.

Mrs. P. You didn't hear me say nothing against the Duke-

Fran. Eh! What!

Mrs. P. Nor against nobody else. But I won't have such goings on in my house no longer.

Fran. What are you talking about?

Mrs. P. It don't consarn you,—but your betters,

Fran. (Aside.) I knew that woman would soon blow up about the Duke. It'll be the town talk next. I tell you what, Mrs. Peeper, you're an imperent meddling woman.

Mrs. P. I don't care. I won't have improper goings on in my house; not for no Duke, nor Prince neither. I

don't understand it, and I don't like it.

Fran. (Mimicking Isabella.) There's very little you do understand; and I doubt much if you understand that little perfect. You've said enough already to commit you to the Queen's Bench; and if you say much more, I'll issue a writ of Habeas Prius, and throw you and your house and furniture into the degrees of Chancery: and then get out if you can. Demme, I knows the law.

(Exit very consequentially.)

Mrs. P. Ah! There's no use talking with servants. They always make mischief; and I'm glad I did not say nothing that he can take hold of. That don't make the Duke no better though. There is not a gayer, nor dissipateder character in all London. He has caused more sorrow to unprotected females!—aye, as never was! But I shan't talk with servants—I shall go to Mr. Clermont, and I shall tell him what I've observed. I think I ought. I think it is nothing more than my dooty. (Exit L. H.)

SCENE IV .- Clermont's Drawing Room.

(The Clarinette is heard nithout B. H. Enter Clermont.)

Cler. Allons! Now I think it is most time, my dear little Julie should wake up. I shall serenade her with her favorite air, "The last Rose of Summer." (He feels his way to her bed-room. Sets the door open. Whilst he is

SCENE IV.

going across the stage, the clock strikes eleven.) How! Eleven o'clock! She has slept four hours, instead of two. Ah, little lazy rogue! Come, come, I shall wake you up now. (Plays "Last Rose of Summer," then listens.) don't hear her stir.

(Enter Mrs. Peeper L. H.)

Never mind, let her sleep a little longer.

Mrs. P. Good evening, Mr. Clermont.

Cler. Good evening, Madame Peeper, what is the good news with you?

Mrs. P. Why, I am sorry, Mr. Clermont, to say there is'nt much good news.

Cler. Well, if there is not any good news, I hope there

is not any bad.

Mrs. P. Why, sir, the news I have got to tell you, won't be very agreeable; but then, its no more than my duty; and I am come to acquaint you with a little goings on, which I havn't been able to understand, and which I don't think has been quite correct.

Cler. Madame, you alarm me very much. What do you

allude to?

Mrs. P. Why, sir, I allude to the Duke of Barnstour.

Cler. The Duke!

Mrs. P. Yes, sir; I hav'nt had any opportunity till now to speak to you alone, or I would have named it to you before.

Cler. Named what? What?

Mrs. P. The Duke has been a frequent visiter here for the last few months; and as he has the character of being a very gay gentleman, I never thought it was very prudent for Lady Julia to be so intimate with him. For you know, sir, if she was ever so innocent, people would talk.

Cler. Madame, what you say is an impossibility.

Mrs. P. Oh, no, sir! I'm not telling you anything but what is true; and if I could have got an opportunity I would have informed you of it before; and then perhaps it would have prevented what has happened. But Lady Julia and her maid Isabella, never would give me an opportunity to speak to you. So what has happened is no fault of mine.

H

Cler. Happened! What has happened?

Mrs. P. Why, sir, about seven o'clock this evening, or half-past seven, Lady Julia, and her lady's-maid, with a portmantle and bandboxes, and her ladyship's dressing-case, drove off with the Duke in his Grace's travelling charot.

Cler. Oh, no, no, madame—at that very hour, Lady Julia was very bad with a headache, and went to bed; and

she is now asleep in her room.

Mrs. P. No, sir; Lady Julia's not in this house. 1

wish she was.

Cler. Madame! Madame! Julie! Julie! Isabella! (Goes into room L.)

Mrs. P. Dear me, I would'nt have had such a thing happen in my house on no account. Poor Mr. Clermont, I'm sure it'ill break his heart. Poor fellow, I feel so sorry for him, I can't tell. I all along had an idea that Lady Julia would elope with the Duke. Deary me! Women are unfeeling creatures. I really sometimes am ashamed of my sex! If the poor man wasn't blind, it would'nt be so bad. But its a cruel case. One so perfectly helpless! I hope it won't do me any harm in letting my lodgings. Oh, that good-for-nothing Duke! If Mr. Clermont had'nt been so helpless, he would'nt have dared -that he would'nt. (Servant, without, calls "Missus.") Yes, I'll be there directly—in a few minutes. I'll go at once, and see what Mary wants, and then I'll come again, and see poor Mr. Clermont. (Exit L. H.)

(Enter Clermont.)

Cler. (Distractedly feels his way, and sinks into a chair.) She's gone! Ah! Je m'etouffe! She was my only friend, and she have leave me alone in this desolate world. She have leave me, who was my light in the most black darkness. I don't care to be blind—that's nothing! If every limb shall be disjoint—if every malady shall afflict me—if the most tormenting poverty shall overwhelm me—that's nothing! She was my riches, my priceless jewel, that all the treasure of the world could never equal. I turn to her, and kiss her hand, and like magic my heart glitter with brilliant joy. Julie! Bonne amie! Yes, she is

still my darling idol! She have been so kind to me, that I cannot forget to love her always, and my last words shall be "God bless you, Julie!" This trial is too much for me to bear! Let me not fly in the face of that Being whose wisdom chooses to afflict me so.—But, oh! Release me! Take this life, oh! take it—take it! (He partly swoons.)

(Enter Francis, running almost out of breath.)

Fran. Master! Master! Good news! Good news! I saw her, I saw her, I saw her. Tol de rol, &c.

(Sings and dances wildly.)

Cler. (Recovering.) Saw who?

Fran. Yes! Tol de rol, tol de rol, &c. Oh, didn't they applaud her!

Cler. Applaud! Who?

Fran. Why, Mam'selle St. Ange!

Cler. St. Ange!

Fran. Yes; that is, Lady Julia. It was no Mam'selle St. Ange at all. It was Lady Julia. I knew her as soon as she came upon the stage.

Cler. Lady Julia on the stage!

Fron. Yes, my Missus, Lady Julia—bless her dear heart, how she did sing! Like a nightingale!—like two nightingales! Tol de rol, &c.

Cler. Lady Julia on the stage!

Fran. Yes; they had it in the bills—"For the deebutt of Mam'selle St. Ange!" But, law! it was no use trying to come over me in that way! Didn't I know my own Missus? Then after the operer was over, wasn't there a row? Every one was calling for Mam'selle St. Ange! St. Ange! St. Ange! Then me and five or six more gentlemen in the gallery, hollered out, "Three cheers for Mam'selle St. Ange!!" And we hurraed, I at the head of them. Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah! Go it, my hinfants! says I: and my hinfants did "go it." Then, when Lady Julia came before the curtain—wasn't there bowkays? The whole stage was kivered with them! So, says I to myself, I'll run home, and be the first one to tell Master; and when I got down into the street, I heard Lord Mellow say

(to some gentlemen, as they were going into the Club) that it was the most successfullest deebutt that was ever made. **Hurrah!** (Runs up to centre door.)

Cler. Lady Julia on the stage!

Fran. (Coming down.) Master, here comes the Duke. Now we'll hear.

Cler. The Duke!

(Enter Duke, quickly.)

Duke. Joy, my dear friend Clermont.

Cler. Friend! Don't insult me, Mons. le Duc. You have deceived me.

Duke. I know I have. Freely acknowledge it. thank heaven, my crime is not so black, that I may not

expiate it.

Cler. Expiate! Comment! Can you collect the thousand fragments of a shattered mirror, join them together, and so cement them, that you may give the glass its pristine polish? And if you break my heart-

Duke. Clermont! Clermont! I come as the messenger of Lady Julia. I come with tidings of happiness.

you hear me?

Cler. I listen.

Duke. I have only obeyed the commands of Lady Julia. Hear the letter she addressed to me, some months ago. (Reads.) " My Lord Duke, I am going to surprise you. " I want a patron; and your Grace, I am sure, will not " refuse the enviable office. After mature deliberation, hav-" ing weighed all circumstances justly, I am determined to go " upon the stage. I am actuated to this step solely by ONE " consideration—unbounded affection for my beloved Cler-" mont!!-

Cler. (Greatly overcome.) François!

(Francis supports him.) Duke. (Reads.) "As for myself, my wants are few;

" and I could live comfortably on very little; but the "thoughts of seeing one so dear to me, suffer privations " (which he must, and very severe ones too) almost distract "me. My views must be frustrated, unless you take the

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"Such being the case, I crave your aid. Clermont must remain in ignorance of our proceeding, for I know mell that he would oppose such a project with all his heart and soul; but, c'est le premier pas qui coute, and after I have once performed successfully, I hope and trust I shall be able to reconcile him to my destiny. Call and see me this afternoon, to talk the matter over; and unless you say that success is absolutely hopeless, I am resolved to pursue with a determination you know me capable of, the achievement in a cause sacred and dear to me beyond the power of language to express. In this spirit, I besech your counsel and assistance. In this spirit, I am sure you will assiduously support me. I am, my Lord Duke, 'gc., &c., Julia Clermont.' Her success, Clermont, has been triumphant, under the assumed name of St. Ange.

Fran. St. Ange! Yes, that's the name she goes by on the stage—and here she comes! Oh! lauk! And in

her Opera dress too.

(Enter Lady Julia, Isabella, and several other Ladies in full Court Dress. Lady Julia runs into Clermont's arms.)

Lady J. Clermont!

Cler. Ma chere, what have you done?

Lady J. Nothing, that you shall ever have cause to condemn me for. Oh Clermont! If you did but know how much I love you!

Cler. Oh, yes, I know. The Duke has read your letter.

Lady J. And you approve?

Cler. Of everything. Bless the Duke.

Duke. Thank you, dear friend.

Cler. Cher Duc-mon ami! (They embrace.)

(The different Ladies congratulate Lady Julia.)

Fran. I'd be almost willing to be blind myself, to have a wife to love me so. Bella! Bella!

Isab. Well come, I might go further and fare worse, I know you love me—you foolish fellow—so there—(gives her hand.)

Fran. (Sobbing comically.) Oh! Oh! This is too

much-so unexpected. To-morrow shan't pass away, with-

out seeing me united in Connubial Marriage.

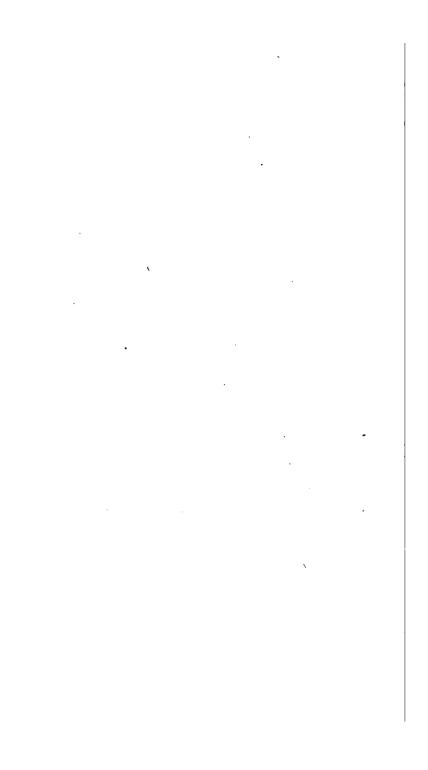
Duke. Now, Lady Julia, supper waits and all our noble friends and relatives, Clermont, are anxious to congratulate you.

Cler. They have good reason. My happiness is complete.

Lady J. And mine will be if our kind friends, pronounce me worthy of being

"An Artist's Wife."

FINIS.



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